

The Concept of Woman: The Interaction of Philosophy and the History of Mentalities

lecture: Professor John Hellman's home
February 3, 1986

I. The Philosophical method used in The Concept of Woman

- a. systematic study using reason and the observation of the senses
- b. systematic focus on arguments of those who wrote (men and women)
- c. not religion or theology
- d. not cultural history
- e. therefore a single thread in the wider picture.

II. In this lecture will indicate in four places where philosophy and the history of mentalities interact, overlap, etc.

- a. Greek schools of philosophy
- b. monastic education
- c. the development of the universities in Europe
- d. mass distribution of popular philosophy after invention of printing press.

III. First a summary of the philosophical theories of sex identity before the Aristotelian Revolution

- a. The pre-Socratics ask the fundamental questions
- b. Plato formulates sex unity
- c. Aristotle formulates sex polarity
- d. the relation of the theory of sex unity or polarity and the presence of women in Greek schools of philosophy
- e. Augustine moves towards sex complementarity via theology
- f. Hildegard of Bingen formulates sex complementarity
- g. the relation of the theory of sex complementarity and the interaction of women and men in Benedictine double monasteries

IV. Second a summary of the philosophical theories of sex identity after the Aristotelian Revolution

- a. the translation movement Islamic, Jewish, Christian
- b. St. Albert and St. Thomas
- c. the foundation and integration of Aristotle into the University of Paris.
- d. The relation of the University of Paris to women and education.
 1. Blanche of Castille
 2. Hildegard of Bingen
 3. The explosion of other universities in Europe

V. The dispersion of popular works spuriously attributed to Aristotle after the invention of the printing press in 1440

VI. Further exploration:

- a. humanism and sex complementarity
- b. Cartesianism and sex unity
- c. The symbolic significance of the French Revolution

Significant areas of interaction between philosophy and historical events

1. The relation between the theory of sex identity and the presence of women in particular schools of philosophy.
 - a. sex unity- women present as disciples
 - b. sex polarity- no women present
 - c. sex complementarity- women present as co-creators of theory
2. What was the historical context for the development of a philosophy of sex complementarity?
 - a. theological belief in the resurrection of the body
 - b. the existence (800-1100) of double monasteries in the Benedictine tradition
3. What is the relation between the adoption of Aristotelian sex polarity in the 13th century and the position of women in institutional educational structures?
 - a. The university of Paris
 1. the Bishops
 2. Blanche of Castille / Hildegard of Bingen
 - b. other European Universities
4. How did the invention of the printing press influence philosophy of sex identity.
 - a. doubtful and spurious texts.
5. further research 1200-1800.
 - a. Italian Humanism
 - b. Cartesianism (French Revolution) analogy ^{key} guillotine